

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PORG
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: NAM SUMMIT: PLO PRESS CONFERENCE

1. SUMMARY: THREE MEMBERS OF PLO DELEGATION HELD PRESS CONFERENCE EVENING AUGUST 14. WHEN QUESTIONED REGARDING HOW FIRM A COMMITMENT PLO IS SEEKING FROM NAM FOR OUSTER OF ISRAEL FROM UN, PLO REP MERELY SAID IT WAS AS FIRM AS THEIR DETERMINATION TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME-LAND. NO OTHER DISCUSSION ON THIS ISSUE. SPOKESMAN ALSO SAID PLO WAS NOT ASKING NAM CONFERENCE TO CONDEMN SYRIA BECAUSE IT WON'T BRING ISSUE OUTSIDE OF ARAB WORLD OUT OF RESPECT TO SYRIAN "PEOPLE". MOST OF PRESS CONFERENCE WAS DEVOTED TO ACCOUNT OF HORRORS SURROUNDING SIEGE AND FALL OF TEL ZAATAR REFUGEE CAMP. EFFORT CALCULATED TO AROUSE ADDITIONAL AND STRONGER SUPPORT FOR PLO'S CASE. SPOKESMAN WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF SYRIAN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON, EVEN CLAIMED SYRIANS PLANNED TO STAY A "VERY LONG TIME" AND THEY CLAIMED INTERVENTION WAS PART OF A U.S. AND ZIONIST PLOT. CHARGE WAS MADE THAT PHALANGISTS WERE BEING ARMED BY U.S., ISRAEL AND SYRIA. END SUMMARY.

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2. THREE MEMBERS OF PLO DELEGATION TO COLOMBO NAM SUMMIT, Wafa(PLO INFORMATION OFFICE) DIRECTOR-GENERAL ZAID ABDEL FATTAH AND THE PLO RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES IN NEW DELHI (FAYZAL UWAYADE) AND COLOMBO (ABUL ADEL) HELD WELL-ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE AUGUST 14 EVENING. MUCH OF PRESS CONFERENCE WAS TAKEN UP WITH LONG RECITATION BY Wafa DIRECTOR GENERAL FATTAH OF CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE SIEGE AND FALL OF THE TEL ZAATAR REFUGEE CAMP. FATTAH PICTURED THE FALL OF TEL ZAATAR AS A VICTORY FOR PALESTINIANS AS IT DEMONSTRATED THEIR STEADFASTNESS, COURAGE AND DETERMINATION TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS. HE CLAIMED PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE EXPOSED SYRIAN INTENTION TO CRUSH LEBANESE PROGRESSIVE FORCES AND PALESTINIANS AND SAID RESISTANCE WAS ALSO A BLOW TO ARAB REGIMES THAT STOOD SILENT DURING MASSACRE. SYRIA WAS STRONGLY ATTACKED AND FATTAH, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SYRIA PLANNED TO ANNEX OR STAY IN THE PART OF LEBANON WHERE ITS TROOPS ARE IN CONTROL, ACCUSED SYRIA OF PLANNING TO STAY IN THESE AREAS A "VERY LONG TIME" AND BASED THIS JUDGEMENT ON NUMBERS OF SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON AND THE FACT THAT THE SYRIAN POUND IS BEING USED AS THE CURRENCY OF THESE AREAS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION OF WHAT PLO'S NEXT MOVE WOULD BE IF NAM CONFERENCE DID NOT "CONVICT" SYRIA, FATTAH POINTED OUT THAT PLO HAS NOT ASKED CONFERENCE TO CONDEMN SYRIA AND THEY DO NOT INTEND TO TAKE MATTER UP IN NAM CONTEXT OTHER THAN TO BRING SITUATION TO MEMBERS' ATTENTION. HE EXPLAINED THIS BY SAYING PLO WOULDN'T BRING QUESTION UP OUTSIDE OF ARAB WORLD OUT OF RESPECT OF SYRIAN PEOPLE. (THIS SEEMS TO RULE OUT LEBANON ISSUE BEING RAISED FORMALLY DURING PRESENT CONFERENCE.) WHEN ASKED FOR HIS EXPLANATION OF SYRIAN INTERVENTION, PLO MAN TURNED QUESTIONER ASIDE SUGGESTING HE ASK SYRIANS WHY THEY INVADED LEBANON AND ARE FIGHTING AGAINST THE PROGRESSIVE LEBANESE FORCES AND THE PALESTINIANS.

4. WHEN ASKED HOW DETERMINED THE PLO WAS TO GET A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMMITMENT FROM THE NAM FOR THE OUSTER OF ISRAEL FROM THE UN, FATTAH SAID MERELY "WITH THE SAME DETERMINATION WE HAVE TO RETURN TO OUR HOMELAND". SUBJECT WAS NOT MENTIONED AGAIN.

5. QUESTION OF STRENGTH OF PHALANGIST FORCES AND HOW THEY WERE BEING ARMED LED TO CHARGE THAT NATO AND U.S. ARMS COME FROM SIXTH FLEET IN THE MEDITERRANEAN,

ISRAELI ARMS FROM ISRAEL AND SOVIET ARMS FROM SYRIA,
WHEN PRESSED BY AMERICAN NEWSMAN TO PROVIDE PROOF OF
DIRECT SUPPLY BY U.S. OF ARMS TO PHALANGISTS, PLO
SPOKESMAN WAS UNABLE TO DO SO BUT CITED BODY OF CIRCUM-
STANTIAL EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT HIS CLAIM. HE ALSO STATED
THAT SOVIETS WERE NOT CONDONING SYRIAN SUPPLY OF
RUSSIAN WEAPONS TO PHALANGISTS. PLO SPOKESMAN CLAIMED
THERE ARE 70,000 TO 90,000 MERCENARIES FIGHTING WITH
PHALANGISTS INCLUDING ARABS, SYRIANS AND AMERICAN
LEBANESE.

6. PRESS CONFERENCE ENDED WITH VOLUNTARY CLARIFICATION
BY PLO SPOKESMAN THAT WAR PALESTINIANS ARE FIGHTING IN
LEBANON IS NOT TO DEFEND LEBANON BUT TO DEFEND THEIR
OWN PEOPLE AND TO ENSURE SAFE BASE FROM WHICH TO
CONTINUE THEIR WAR AGAINST ZIONISTS.
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